

#### THE FUTURE METROPOLIS.

The commission appointed to inquire into the expediency of consolidating the cities of New-York and Brooklyn and the adjacent territory, including Staten Island, into one great municipality, will submit a favorable report at the coming session of the Legislature, together with a bill for carrying out the project. The paper submitted by Mr. ANDREW H. GREEN at the recent meeting of the commission contained many interesting suggestions on the subject, and as he was authorized to prepare a draught of a bill in accordance with his views, there is no doubt that his position will be sustained by at least a majority of his fellow-Commissioners.

The considerations in favor of the proposed consolidation are manifold and cogent. The sentiment of elation at the idea of municipal magnitude is the least among these, but that is not a frivolous one. New-York has the situation for a great metropolis unequalled in the civilized world. About its magnificent bay and along the rivers which afford its unrivaled water front are the opportunities for a population, an industry, and a commerce such as are presented by none of the great capitals of the Old World. The development of this community does not and cannot heed the lines of jurisdiction which divide it, but it is nevertheless cramped and restrained by this division and by a lack of the free interplay of industrial, commercial, and political forces. In everything but name and political organization this community is one, and there is no reason why it should not hold the position before the world of a single metropolis, standing second only to London, and with a prospect of outstripping its greatness in the near future. It would be an advantage to its people to have the solidarity of its interests recognized and established by a union in one municipality, which would grow more and more homogeneous with the development that would be thereby promoted. The local pride that would be fostered by a sense of civic greatness and of rivalry with the first cities of the earth would have a wholesome effect upon its future administration.

A narrow view of the important question of establishing closer and easier communication between the two sides of the East River, and of overcoming by bridge and tunnel the barrier between the metropolis and the lines that connect it with the vast continent of which it is the commercial emporium, is fostered by the fact that the city does not include within its municipal limits all the area that is tributary to its industrial and commercial activity. The lines of jurisdiction beget a petty jealousy, a feeling of difference of rights and interests, that have no substantial basis. Let it be recognized that this metropolitan area is one in interest and destiny, the field of a common activity upon which the prosperity of the whole depends, and the advantage of the closest bonds of union and the freest intercourse will be speedily appreciated.

The consolidation would stimulate the bridging and tunneling of the waters which tend to divide the metropolis into sections and to isolate it in a measure from our own country while they make it so accessible to the rest of the world. This is one of the greatest needs for its normal growth. It would retain every advantage of the surrounding and intervening waters as a means of communication while overcoming their disadvantage as a barrier of

division and separation. It would give us the double benefit of ease of communication and facility of intercourse by both land and water, and this would impart a new impetus to growth and prosperity. Mr. GREEN, in his report, dwelt upon the importance of a common interest in citizenship. The man who works or is engaged in business on Manhattan Island and lives and votes on Long Island has a divided interest. He is not likely in either place to have the zeal that properly belongs to citizenship, and he cannot give it effect in both. He ought to feel that he labors and lives in one community and shares in the responsibility that attaches to the conduct of its affairs.

The greatest apprehension in conservative minds regarding the proposed consolidation concerns the government of the future metropolis. No doubt the extension of its limits would compel the adoption of a broader plan of municipal administration and one better adapted to its requirements than any that now exists, but it is our belief that the solution of the problem of local self-government would be materially promoted. The taking in of suburban and semi-rural districts grouped about the denser population of the present cities would have at once a conservative and a progressive effect, and would make administration upon broader lines easier and more effective. We are now ruled in part by the rural portions of the State, but it is largely those portions which have no interest or sympathy with us and no knowledge of our conditions and needs. The difficulties of city government are due not so much to extension as to density of population. No one will pretend that the Fourth Ward or the city below Fourteenth Street would be better governed if isolated and left to itself than it is as an integral part of the present municipality. In fact, if the Aldermanic districts had no separate functions they would be better off. Neither is the city worse governed for including the section beyond the Harlem River known as the annexed district. The government of New-York and of Brooklyn could be materially improved by uniting them and bringing into the same municipality the contiguous area that really belongs to the one community that surrounds the great seaport which is the gateway of the continent. To bring this population together under one system of administration, properly devised for the regulation of affairs belonging to the whole community and to its various parts, would undoubtedly in the long run be productive of great improvement in methods and results. At all events the unification of this metropolitan community is at once the logical result of the inevitable coalition of its growth and a means of promoting its future growth in a normal and healthy way. It is sure to come, and the sooner it is provided for the more harmonious will be the lines of the development that is to follow, until New-York takes its position as the metropolis of the western world on a footing surely not inferior to that of the greatest of European cities.